

Exhibit A



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

SEP 18 2017

**BY EMAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

To: See List of Addressees - Attachment A

Re: Allocation for Operable Unit 2 Remedial Action
Diamond Alkali Superfund Site, Essex and Hudson Counties, New Jersey

Dear Sir/Madam:

On August 28, 2017, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") hosted a meeting at its New York City offices to provide you with an opportunity to share your views on the Agency's proposed settlement framework for implementation of the remedy selected for the lower 8.3 miles of the Passaic River, which is Operable Unit 2 ("OU2") of the Diamond Alkali Superfund Site (the "Site"). I want to once again thank all of the parties that participated in the meeting. Your participation has helped both EPA and the other parties better understand the issues and concerns regarding the framework.

After careful consideration, the Agency has concluded that the allocation process should include all of the potentially responsible parties ("PRPs") for OU2 (apart from the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission ("PVSC"), the four municipal PRPs referred to below, and the PRPs that settle pursuant to the "early" cash-out settlement that EPA offered in March 2017), and should not be limited to the "middle tier" parties. Transparency and fairness are concepts that EPA has consistently stated are of importance to the Agency in this matter and, after considering your comments and concerns, we think those concepts are best served by having one allocation for all of these parties.

Numerous parties at the August 28, 2017 meeting expressed concern regarding the financial burden that would be placed on PRPs that are not responsible for the release of dioxins, furans and/or polychlorinated biphenyls ("PCBs") into the Lower Passaic River if those parties are not given the opportunity to settle with the United States for their OU2 liability, as opposed to having to implement the remedial action for OU2. EPA appreciates those concerns. As we have stated, we anticipate that with the help of the allocation process, EPA will be able to offer cash-out settlements to a number of the parties.

Similarly, EPA's expectation that the private PRPs responsible for the release of dioxins, furans and/or PCBs will perform the OU2 remedial action has not changed. It is therefore our goal that, in addition to supporting potential additional cash-out settlements, the allocation will lead to a consent decree in which those parties agree to perform the OU2 remedial action under EPA oversight.

To perform the allocation, EPA has retained AlterEcho and its senior allocation specialist, Mr. David Batson, Esq., through the Agency's prime contract with CSRA. EPA and AlterEcho invite you to attend a meeting to introduce the allocation process. Among other things, the allocation will provide opportunities for participating parties to comment on factors that should be part of the allocation and to contribute relevant information about themselves and other parties for use in the allocation. This meeting will be held on October 13, 2017 at 9:00 A.M. on the 27th floor of EPA's offices, which are located at 290 Broadway, New York, NY 10007.

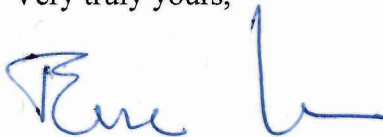
Mr. Batson has requested that each party designate a primary contact for future communications on the allocation and that the primary contact attend the October 13th meeting in person. EPA has established a conference line for others wishing to participate. The call-in number is 866-299-3188, and the conference code is 212-637-3136. Please respond to EPA by October 5, 2017 with the following information: 1) name of and party represented by the primary contact attending the meeting; 2) names of other representatives planning to call in for each such party. Your response should be directed to Alice Yeh, Remedial Project Manager, Emergency and Remedial Response Division at yeh.alice@EPA.gov or U.S. EPA Region 2, 290 Broadway - 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007.

After the allocator assigns shares to the parties, EPA will make a decision as to which parties should receive cash-out settlement offers, the dollar amount of each offer, and how the money raised by the cash-out settlements will be applied towards OU2 costs.

During the August 28, 2017 meeting, several parties raised questions concerning EPA's enforcement approach for PVSC and the municipalities to which EPA issued notices of potential liability (the City of Newark, Borough of East Newark, Town of Harrison and Town of Kearny). EPA has initiated discussions with PVSC and the municipalities about substantial contributions that, collectively, they might make to the OU2 remedy. At this time, we do not believe it would be helpful to include them in the allocation.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Assistant Regional Counsel Juan Fajardo at 212-637-3132 or fajardo.juan@epa.gov.

Very truly yours,



Eric J. Wilson
Deputy Director for Enforcement and Homeland Security
Emergency and Remedial Response Division

cc: Brian Donohue, Esq., USDOJ
Mark Barash, Esq., USDOJ
Kate Barfield, Esq., NOAA
John Dickinson, Esq., New Jersey Attorney General's Office

Attachment A – List of Addressees**Diamond Alkali Superfund Site****Lower 8.3 Miles - Passaic River**

Company	Contact Information	Facility
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